

REMARKS

With respect to the claim rejections under '112, Applicant has deleted the word "fresh" in claim 1, line 13. The size of the PVPP particles relates to the commercial PVPP itself, which is described on page 5, lines 11-24. This invention utilizes such PVPP having particles 90% or more of a particle size larger than 10 µm, as stated in claim 1, lines 3-4. The preamble in claim 1 has been rewritten to more clearly provide an antecedent basis for "main flow" in line 3. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 12 and 13 were again rejected on Westermann on ground that the reference "possibly points towards Applicant's asserted process". Applicant traverses this rejection. As stated in the previous Amendment, the main pipeline flow of beer in Westermann is from inlet 4 to outlet 5 via fluidized bed vessel 1 in which it contacts PVPP. A small part of this main flow is continuously taken off through line 6 and passed into wash station 7 which may have a centrifuge in it. Either by filtration or centrifugation, beer from line 6 is returned to the main flow by line 9. That the means of separation in the wash cycle is optional illustrates that Westermann had not appreciated the advantages of using a centrifuge in the main high volume flow stream. In that context, there is no equivalence whatsoever between filtration and centrifugation, for the reasons given.

Westermann stated that due to lower mass velocity in the upper, large-diameter, section of the vessel 1 absorbent particles will not be carried from the vessel through the line 5. Westermann believed that he was dealing with a situation similar to that of a catalytic cracker where a fluidized bed is maintained by gases; in that situation the specific gravity of the particles is orders greater than that of the gas and they will hardly be carried over at all. Here it is inevitable that large amounts of particles will be carried over into the line 5 by the main flow of the beverage and it is inevitable that the principal mode of separation of those particles from the main flow will be filtration.

In contrast, in applicant's continuous process, the main pipeline flow of beer treated with PVPP particles of a selected specific size is continuously centrifuged to remove at least 95% of the used PVPP therefrom in the form of a concentrated paste or slurry and to form a separate flow stream consisting of the main flow of stabilized beer. Accordingly, it is respectfully urged that Westermann does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully believes that the claims as amended defines allowable subject matter and patentable invention over the cited art. Entry of this amendment is believed to be proper as placing the application in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal.

Respectfully submitted,


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